

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A modular convertible top assembly for a vehicle, comprising:

a modular support panel further comprising a substantially flat wall aligned on a substantially vertical plane and extending a majority of the distance between a vehicle floor and a vehicle beltline; ~~member acting as a seat back panel;~~

a linkage assembly mounted to said ~~member~~ support panel;

at least one roof panel, said linkage assembly supporting the at least one roof panel that is movable between a passenger compartment covering position and a stowed position;

a hydraulic system connected to said linkage assembly and operably retracting and extending said linkage assembly, said hydraulic system including a hydraulic pump mounted to said member; and

an electronic control unit mounted to said ~~member~~ support panel, said electronic control unit being connected with said hydraulic system for activating said hydraulic control system for controllably retracting and extending said linkage assembly.

2. (currently amended). The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 1, wherein said ~~member~~ support panel is ~~includes~~ a removable bulkhead panel, said electronic control unit, and hydraulic pump are mounted to said removable panel.

3. (original) The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 2, further comprising a sound system speaker mounted to said removable panel.

4. (previously presented) The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 5 further comprising a sound system speaker mounted to said wall.

5. (previously presented) A modular convertible top assembly for a vehicle, comprising:

a wall member adapted to be mounted in a vehicle;

a linkage assembly mounted to said wall, said linkage assembly supporting at least one roof panel that is movable between a first position for covering a passenger compartment and a second stowed position;

a hydraulic control system connected to said linkage assembly for controllably retracting and extending said linkage assembly, said hydraulic control system including a hydraulic pump mounted to said wall;

an electronic control unit mounted to said wall and in communication with said hydraulic control system for activating said hydraulic control system for controllably retracting and extending said linkage assembly; and

a hold down bracket assembly mounted to said wall, said hold down bracket assembly adapted to lock said linkage assembly in said second stowed position.

6. (currently amended) A method of assembly for a convertible top assembly to a vehicle, the method comprising:

(a) mounting a pair of extendable linkage assemblies to a bulkhead panel member, a majority of said bulkhead panel member being oriented along a substantially vertical plane, said pair of extendable linkage assemblies being attached to a convertible roof;

(b) mounting an electronic control unit to said member;

(c) mounting a hydraulic pump to said member and connecting said hydraulic pump to said extendable linkage assembly; and

(d) mounting said ~~preassembled, modular member~~ convertible top assembly to said vehicle after steps (a), (b) and (c).

7. (previously presented) The method according to claim 6, wherein said bulkhead panel member is removable from the vehicle in a non-destructive manner.

8. (previously presented) A modular convertible top assembly for a vehicle, comprising:

a member adapted to be mounted to a body structure of a vehicle;

a linkage assembly mounted to said member, said linkage assembly supporting at least one roof panel that is movable between a first position for covering a passenger compartment and a second stowed position; and

at least one guide pin disposed on one of said member and said body structure of the vehicle, and at least one mounting hole disposed on the other of said

member and said body structure, said at least one guide pin and said at least one mounting hole cooperating to define a positioning guide when said member is assembled to said body structure.

9. (previously presented) The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 8, further comprising a hydraulic control system connected to said linkage assembly for controllably retracting and extending said linkage assembly, said hydraulic control system including a hydraulic pump mounted to said member.

10. (previously presented) The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 9, further comprising an electronic control unit mounted to said member and in communication with said hydraulic control system for activating said hydraulic control system for controllably retracting and extending said linkage assembly.

11. (previously presented) The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 8 wherein the at least one roof panel comprises at least two hard-top, convertible roof panels.

12. (previously presented) The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 8 wherein the member is a bulkhead panel.

13. (previously presented) The method according to claim 6 wherein the convertible roof includes at least two substantially rigid, hard-top panels.

14. (currently amended) The method according to claim 6 wherein the bulkhead panel member is adjacent ~~a seat back panel attached to~~ the back of a vehicle seat.

15. (previously presented) A preassembled convertible roof module comprising:

a panel having a substantially vertically planar orientation;

a top stack linkage system mounted on the panel prior to final vehicle assembly;

a latch motor; and

an electronic controller mounted on the panel, the electronic controller being operable to control the latch motor.

16. (previously presented) The module according to claim 15 further comprising a convertible roof coupled to the linkage system prior to final vehicle assembly.

17. (previously presented) The module according to claim 16 wherein the convertible roof includes at least one retractable hard-top exterior roof panel.

18. (previously presented) The module according to claim 15 further comprising a hydraulic pump mounted on the panel prior to final vehicle assembly.

19. (previously presented) A preassembled convertible roof module comprising:
a panel;
a top stack linkage system mounted on the panel prior to final vehicle assembly;
a latch motor;
an electronic controller mounted on the panel, the electronic controller being operable to control the latch motor; and
at least one guide pin projecting from the panel to assist in final vehicle assembly.

20. (previously presented) The module according to claim 19 further comprising a threaded attachment system coupled to the panel to assist in final vehicle assembly and allow the panel to be removable from the vehicle.

21. (previously presented) The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 1, wherein the electronic control unit operably controls at least a window defroster and a latch motor.

22. (currently amended) The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 1, wherein the modular support ~~member~~ panel includes holes and offset surfaces on said substantially flat wall, said wall is extending transversely in said vehicle at least

~~a majority of the distance between two of said linkage assemblies is a wall aligned on a substantially vertical plane and substantially extending between a vehicle floor and a vehicle beltline.~~

23. (previously presented) The modular convertible top assembly according to claim 1, wherein the at least one roof panel comprises at least two hard-top, convertible roof panels.

24. (new) The module according to Claim 19 further comprising a retractable hard-top roof coupled to the top stack linkage mechanism.

25. (new) The method according to Claim 6 further comprising controlling operation of a roof latch with the electronic control unit.

26. (new) The method according to Claim 6 further comprising controlling operation of a lamp with the electronic control unit.

27. (new) The method according to Claim 6 further comprising controlling operation of a defroster with the electronic control unit.

28. (new) The method according to Claim 6 further comprising moving hinge assemblies to open and close a cover, the cover concealing at least part of a convertible roof when the roof is fully retracted and the cover is closed.